

Coastal America 2008 Partnership Awards Program Recipients

The Coastal America Awards Program annually recognizes efforts to protect, preserve, and restore the nation's coastal resources and ecosystems through collaborative action and partnership. Three award categories exist:

1. Partnership Awards recognize outstanding Coastal America partnership efforts and/or multi-agency projects. The Partnership Award winners receive a letter of recognition from the President which is presented at a ceremony by a Coastal America Principal.
2. Special Recognition Awards recognize non-federal organizations for their demonstrated leadership in establishing partnerships. The Special Recognition Award winners receive a letter of recognition from the Chairman of Coastal America which is presented at a ceremony by a Coastal America Principal.
3. Spirit Awards recognize outstanding partnership efforts that demonstrate the "spirit" of Coastal America. The Spirit Award winners receive a letter of recognition from the Chairman of Coastal America, which is generally presented at a ceremony by a Coastal America Regional Principal.

Background:

The Coastal America Partnership Award criteria are:

- At least one (1) federal agency partner, as well as one (1) non-federal entity must be involved in the project.
- The project must clearly demonstrate the "value added" of the partnership effort.
- The project should demonstrate an innovative or unique way of accomplishing stated goals and objectives with positive environmental results.
- The project must demonstrate a contribution to the Coastal America objectives: (1) to protect, preserve and restore the Nation's coastal resources; and/or (2) to increase public awareness and education.

Six Partnership Awards and five Spirit Awards were approved in 2008. The summaries for the winning projects are attached.

Project Summaries

Partnership Awards

1) Team Name: Sesuit Creek-Bridge Street Salt Marsh Restoration Team

Award Category: Partnership

Summary:

The Sesuit Creek-Bridge Street restoration project located in Dennis, on Cape Cod is the largest proactive salt marsh restoration project completed thus far in Massachusetts. The Sesuit Creek-Bridge Street restoration achieved many intended goals, including increased tidal exchange, improved habitat, public safety improvement, and enhanced educational and recreational access. The project restores 65-acres of degraded salt marsh and this is the last of 4 culvert that were replaced because they were previously barriers to fish passage to Scargo Lake, at the headwaters of Sesuit Creek.

Partners:

The Citizens and Taxpayers of the Town of Dennis, NOAA Restoration Center, USFWS New England Field Office, USDA NRCS, US Army Corps of Engineers, MA CZM Wetlands Restoration Program, MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, MA State Representative Cleon Turner, MA State Senator Robert O'Leary, MA Highway Department Southeast District, Association to Preserve Cape Cod, University of New Hampshire, US EPA

2) Team Name: The South Coast Habitat Restoration Project

Award Category: Partnership

Summary:

The South Coast Habitat Restoration Project was initiated in 1997. The Ninigret Pond eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) restoration component restored forty (40) acres of eelgrass habitat within Ninigret Pond, the largest of the salt ponds in Southern Rhode Island. The project also established a protocol for identifying optimum eelgrass transplant conditions which can be applied to other restoration projects. Monitoring during the first year following eelgrass seeding showed densities that far exceeded the performance standard.

Partners:

NOAA Restoration Center, University of RI/GSO, USACE - NE District, University of RI CELS-GEO, University of New Hampshire, RI Department of Environmental Management, University of RI CELS-NRS, Inner Space, Southwind Construction.

3) Team Name: Delaware Bay Oyster Restoration Project Team

Award Category: Partnership

Summary:

In 2005 the Delaware Bay Oyster Restoration Team planted 286,000 bushels of shell in Delaware Bay, roughly 505,000 bushels in 2006, and about 680,000 bushels in 2007. Approximately 300,000 bushels are proposed to be planted in 2008 with remaining

funding available. The oyster restoration project includes a public outreach component that encompasses active participation bay-wide to educate and publicize the value of a healthy estuary.

Partners include:

Haskin Shellfish Research Laboratory, Rutgers University, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, NJDEP, Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Delaware River Basin Commission USACE, Delaware Estuary Program Delaware River and Bay Authority, Cumberland County Empowerment Zone Corporation, Delaware Bay Shell Fisheries Council, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Delaware State University.

4) Team Name: Florida Artificial Tire Reef Cleanup Team

Award Category: Partnership

Summary:

The team is cooperating to remove a failed tire reef that has resulted in the smothering or other physical destruction of the living reef community adjacent to the site of the tire pile near Broward County, Florida. This ongoing project requires marine science expertise from all three levels of government, tire processing capabilities and expertise inherent in the state government and large scale marine salvage skills that exist in the U.S. military to accomplish the job. The project has also endeavored to constructively reuse the recovered tires in industrial applications by having them shredded and processed into Tire Derived Fuel.

Partners:

Broward County Environmental Protection Division, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Coastal America, U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army, NOAA, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, TAG Resource Recovery, State of Florida, Environmental Protection Division, Broward County, Port Everglades - Broward County

5) Team Name: North Deer Island Protection Team

Award Category: Partnership

Summary:

This project protected North Deer Island, a large natural island of 144 acres in size in West Bay of the Galveston Bay system, owned and managed by the Houston Audubon Society. In 2000, project partners began an effort to protect the island from rapid erosion. Phase I was completed in 2003, protecting 4700 feet of shoreline along the southern half of the island. Project partners completed Phase II in 2008, protecting the critical north shoreline where much of the upland habitat for nesting lies, as well as protecting remaining exposed areas along the southeast shoreline and reinforcing previous structures placed in Phase I. In aggregate, the partnership placed 24,100 tons of highly durable limestone erosion control structures to protect nearly 2 miles of shoreline and protected habitats of ~20,000 birds of nineteen species of waterbirds.

Partners:

Houston Audubon Society, USFWS Texas Coastal Program, EPA Region 6, NRG Energy, Inc. EPA Gulf of Mexico Program, Texas General Land Office, URS Corporation, Galveston Bay Estuary Program

6) Team Name: Partners for the Carpinteria Salt Marsh--Basin 1 and South Marsh Restoration Project

Award Category: Partnership

Summary:

The 230-acre Carpinteria Salt Marsh is located in the City of Carpinteria, the now protected land ownership ranges from there to the County of Santa Barbara, the University of California Reserve System (U.C. Reserve), the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County and numerous private individuals and groups whose properties extend into the salt marsh. The Basin 1 and South Marsh Restoration Project restored historic tidal circulation; created submerged cobble beds; removed nonnative invasive vegetation including, and planted over 18,000 locally native wetland and upland plants. Other achievements include increasing overall educational opportunities associated with coastal resources in the region by providing improved and managed access for people to safely enjoy the salt marsh. The Basin 1 and South Marsh Restoration Project is one of the few remaining coastal wetland complexes in this region and in California.

Partners not limited to:

Land Trust for Santa Barbara County, California Coastal Conservancy, County of Santa Barbara-Flood Control, NOAA-Restoration Center, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-Region 8, County of Santa Barbara-Energy Division, Sandyland Cove Homeowners Association, Sandyland Protective Association, The Lennox Foundation, City of Carpinteria, University of California Reserve System-Carpinteria Salt Marsh Reserve.

Spirit Awards

7) Team Name: Carmans River Fish Ladder Partnership

Award Category: Spirit

Summary:

The project team installed an Alaskan Steepass style fish ladder on the Hards Lake Dam Spillway on the Carmans River in Southaven County Park, Long Island, NY. This is the first permanent fish passage device on Long Island, and is the first fish ladder in the Long Island South Shore Estuary Reserve. The project was nominated mission because it will help restore diadromous fish populations by providing access to additional habitat, including spawning grounds. Diadromous fish are a valuable coastal resource because they play an important role in coastal ecosystems as prey fish for several species in oceans, estuaries, and freshwater rivers.

Partners include:

Trout Unlimited, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New York State Department of Transportation, Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA Restoration Center, Fish America Foundation, Suffolk County Department of Parks and Recreation, EDF, Long Island South Shore Estuary Reserve Office

8) Team Name: Merrimac Farm Encroachment Project

Award Category: Spirit

Summary:

Merrimac Farm is a 312 acre property in Prince William County, VA recently acquired by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. The partnership team acted to permanently conserve the property for public use including hunting, fishing, wildlife watching and environmental education programs. This transaction will allow the US Marine Corps to preserve the property from future development and provides a wetlands buffer for mitigation banking.

Partners include:

McDowell Family, Prince William Conservation Alliance, VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Marine Corps Base - Quantico, Naval Facilities Engineering Command – Washington, Headquarters – US Marine Corps

9) Team Name: Crocodile Lake National Wildlife Refuge Habitat Restoration Team

Award Category: Spirit

Summary:

Established in 1980, the 6,700 acre refuge is located on upper Key Largo in the Florida Keys, Monroe County, approximately 40 miles southwest of Miami, Florida.

In 2007, the team negotiated to use ~37,250 cubic yards of roadway fill to restore the 2.16 acre abandoned limestone rock mining pit (known as the Keystone Pit) to historic elevation and create a hardwood forest important to endangered species. Because this was accomplished at no cost to the refuge the partnership saved up to 1 million dollars of state and federal funds.

Partners include:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Friends and Volunteers of Refuges, Florida Department of Transportation

10) Team Name: East Bay Wetland and Water Quality Protection Project Team

Award Category: Spirit

Summary:

This project restored and protected over 8,000 acres of important habitat along the Texas coast along Galveston Bay. By working closely with contractors and suppliers to develop new land-based techniques to stage and place breakwater materials without damaging fringing marsh areas partners were able to exceed the original target of 9800 linear feet of breakwater, while staying within the project budget. Nearly 100 volunteer laborers worked on this project in addition to the partners listed below.

Partners include:

USFWS Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, Galveston Bay Foundation, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services, EPA Region 6, NRG Energy, Inc., EPA Gulf of Mexico Program, Galveston Bay Estuary Program

11) Team Name: Sea Train - Alaska SeaLife Center

Award Category: Spirit

Summary:

The Sea Train program was conceived as a way to provide a science-based field learning experience for Anchorage students, using Alaska Railroad cars as unique mobile classrooms. The Sea Train program connects energy concepts with ecosystem information to broaden student experience, knowledge, and perspectives. Classes on board explore energy themes as students travel between Anchorage and the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward on the Alaska Railroad.

Partners:

The Alaska SeaLife Center (a Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center), the Anchorage School District, the Alaska Railroad Corporation, the U.S. Forest Service, and the National Park Service